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The Guiding Star of the East

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The Star

What meaneth this Star in the Eastern sky,
Like a luminous pendant hanging high;
This Heavenly manifestation so rare,
As if in answer to human prayer?
A beacon light to the three Wise men,
Guiding them to little Bethlehem.
O Star of the East, O miracle Star,
Bringing peace to nations near and afar.

The Vision

I know not whether by trance or by dream,
Or if an angel with garments agleam,
Came to reveal to the wise men of old
What Prophets of Israel had long foretold.
But the vision came and the wise men saw,
The message heard, though they trembled with awe,
And with grateful hearts prepared to obey,
Their faith firmly pinned to the Star's bright ray,
Their hope for deliverance strong and sure,
While love kept them courageous to endure.
O bright, gleaming vision of light and love
Sent from the Heavenly Father above.

The Magi

The Hindoo

'Twas December, the night was clear and chill,
Alone with his God prayed the Hindoo still;
Prayed for more light than the Vedas would give;
Prayed that his soul after death might but live.
For faith in Brahm and the Triad had ceased,
As yearning for knowledge and truth increased.
Thus the vision came to Melchior that night
As the Star of the East rose into sight.

The Egyptian

In Egypt there dwelt in the days gone by
Balthasar, a priest, one of the Magi.
Away where the Nile overflows its bank,
Where the tombs of Pharaohs also rank
With the obelisks, pyramids and sphinx,
And sacred history with the Hebrew links.
The land where many religions abound,
Where ancient records in marble are found,
Where Priests still worshiped the one God Supreme,
While common people in ignorance were seen.
To Balthasar the vision came one night,
While the radiant Eastern Star shone bright.

The Greek

In the land of genius, art and song,
Where philosophers and poets belong,
Where patriotism and valor achieved,
And honors lost were so nobly retrieved,
Where knowledge as a rare jewel was sought,
And wisdom and learning were dearly bought.
But of what avail this knowledge indeed
When the longing heart of man was in need?
Thus felt the Greek as alone at his prayer,
While the stars above shone never so fair.
Night with its silence, so tranquil and calm,
To his yearning heart brought a peaceful balm.
The burden so heavy seemed to depart,
While rejoicing and praise filled his glad heart.
Thus the vision came to Kasper that night,
As the glorious Star blazed into light.

The Journey

Divinely led by the bright Eastern Star,
Came the Egyptian, so called, Balthasar;
Melchior, the Hindoo; Kasper, the Greek—
That together the New King they might seek.

While the brilliant Star to the Westward moved,
These wise men gladly their journey pursued.
No need had they to feel fear or alarm,
Their God, who led them, would shield them from harm.
No fierce desert sand-storm caused them dismay,
Nor delayed the tread of their camels' way.
No dread of robbers which infest that land,
Though a costly gift each bore in his hand.
Peace reigned supreme in each loyal breast,
Simply obeying; trusting God for the rest.
No grand retinue of servants brought they,
But unattended they traveled the way.
Though each one's possessions were very great
And kings had bestowed honors in state.
But alone they must follow, ever on,
In the wake of the Star, lest it be gone,
And they, alas, should not find the new King
Nor lay at his feet the presents they bring.

Jerusalem

After many days on the desert sands,
The wise men reached the more fertile lands,
And anxiously scanning the distant view
Saw Jerusalem, the pride of the Jew,

With its massive walls, so stately and tall,
Its gates swung wide, a mart for all
Who bring their ware of spices and wines,
Ebony, perfumes and gems from the mines.
On this highway, leading to the Joppa gate,
The wise men hastened lest they be late.
And as they passed through the portals old,
Curious indeed was the crowd, and bold.
Whom were these strangers, of dignified mien,
Each on a camel, with canopied screen,
Trimnings of gold and scarlet and blue,
Traveling from far—the spectators knew?
What could their mission be to the king?
In peace they come, for no weapons they bring.
Yes, on to the king's palace they go,
To inquire of Herod what they would know;
And saying, "Where is He that is born
King of the Jews, on this fair winter's morn?
We have seen in the Eastern sky His Star,
And are come to worship Him from afar."
And Herod, the king, trembled with fear,
And sought the chief priests and scribes to hear,
Demanding that they should even tell
Where Christ should be born, and his fears to quell.
"Thus it is written by prophets," they said,

"In Bethlehem of Judea," they read.
"For a Governor shall come out of thee
That shall rule my people Israel, and he
Shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor,
The mighty God, the Everlasting Father,
The Prince of Peace, called Immanuel."
This, to Herod the chief priests did tell.
Then Herod, the wicked king who reigned,
Sent forward the wise men, while he feigned
That he also wished to worship the King,
And that when he was found, word they should bring.

Joseph and Mary

In the little town of Bethlehem,
The narrow streets were astir with men,
While many women and children too,
Increased the number not a few.
Some came from afar, some from near by,
While the aged with the young did vie;
Came to be taxed as the law decreed,
Lineal descendants of David's seed.
Among the many arriving there
Was one with face full of anxious care—
Joseph—with Mary, his virgin wife,

Mingling amidst this tumult and strife,
Both were aweary and travel-stained.
The asses they rode, foot-sore and lamed.
Amid the confusion and the din,
They made their way to the village inn,
But learned, alas, that there was no room,
So they sadly turned away in gloom.
A lowly abode at last was found—
A stable with no floor but the ground,
With hay for a bed, and the stars for light:
Here, lowly, was born the Saviour that night.

And the angels in glory, rejoicing, sang,
While floating afar sweet cadences rang:
"Hallelujah! a Saviour on earth is born,
Rejoice all ye people this glad Christmas morn."

The Shepherds

And there were shepherds abiding near,
Out in the fields, with no thought of fear,
Faithfully guarding their sheep that night,
That nothing come to harm or affright;
Each with his shepherd's crook by his side—

His sturdy weapon, support and guide;
The sky above, a canopy blue,
With a myriad of lights sparkling through,
Twinkling and gleaming with silvery light,
Casting their rays o'er the hills that night.
When suddenly there burst into view
A marvelous light of dazzling hue.
And lo! an angel came upon them,
While glory shone over Bethlehem;
And the angel's voice sweetly essayed
To calm the shepherds, who were sore afraid:
"Fear not, O shepherds, behold I bring,
Good tidings to you of a new born King;
Tidings of joy, which indeed shall be,
To all peoples in land or on sea.
For unto you is born on this day,
In Bethlehem just over the way,
A Saviour, which is the Christ, the Lord,
By men and angels to be adored.
And this shall be a sign unto you,
To quell your doubtings, to know it true,
Ye shall find, even as I have said,
The babe cradled in a manger bed,
And gently wrapped in His swaddling clothes."
While the angel spoke there suddenly rose

Of Heaven's glad host, a multitude,
Praising as only the angels could,
Singing, "Peace on earth, good will to men,
Glory to God in the Highest. Amen."
And it came to pass as the angels went,
The shepherds wondered what it all meant;
And said one to another that night,
"We have seen a most wonderful sight.
Let us to Bethlehem even go—
See what is come to pass, also know
That which the Lord hath to us revealed
Of this new King, that is come to wield
A sceptre of divine grace and love,
Come from the bosom of God above."
So to Bethlehem they came with haste,
Precious the moments, no time to waste.
Here they sought the humble stable home,
Where Mary and Joseph were forced to roam.
There they found the babe of lowly birth,
Sent a Redeemer, for all the earth,
With Mary, His virgin mother so pure,
The scoffs of the world glad to endure;
For was she not chosen from among all
To bear and nourish, to cherish withal
This infant sent to bless all mankind?

Thus the babe, Jesus, the shepherds did find.
And they told abroad what they had seen,
While people questioned what it might mean.
And the shepherds, rejoicing, went their way,
While the Star shone above where the child lay.

And the Heavenly hosts, rejoicing, sang
While o'er all the world the echoes rang:
"Messiah is come bringing joy and peace,
Praises to God will nevermore cease;
For the manger cradles the new-born King
And men and angels rejoice and sing."

Adoration

With gladness the wise men resumed their way,
While the Star above shed its silvery ray,
And their hearts rejoiced for its guiding light
As on to Bethlehem they went that night.
And the Star stood o'er where lay the young child
In the arms of Mary, so gentle and mild.
The wise men their treasures laid at his feet—
The gold and myrrh, and frankincense sweet,
And worshiped the babe so lowly born,
Praising God on that first Christmas morn.
For the Star of Heaven and Earth to them,
Is, "The light of the world," born in Bethlehem.



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